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LETTER DATED 27 JANUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to attach the text of a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. F. Botha, concerning the situation in Angola. I should be grateful if the letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. R. W. STEWARD
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 27 January 1993 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General

The deteriorating situation in Angola and the collapse of the peace process can have far-reaching implications, not only for Angola but for the entire sub-continent. The South African Government has consistently, in support of international efforts, attempted to defuse the tension between the two parties and to facilitate a meeting between the two leaders. The South African Government has consistently urged both parties to implement the Bicesse Accords, and to accept the election results of 29 and 30 September 1992 in order to enhance mutual understanding and national reconciliation.

The present conflict is a tragedy for the people of Angola, who illustrated by their substantial participation in the elections, that they desire peace, democracy and economic well-being.

During my visits to Angola in November 1992, I warned both parties that unless they entered into dialogue as a matter of urgency, it was inevitable that the situation would deteriorate. I pointed out that this would result in an increasing failure on both sides to honour their obligations under the peace accords. The recent deterioration in the political and military situation in Angola has borne out my worst fears and concerns.

As fellow Africans we can however not despair of the Angolan peace process. We are morally obliged to assist each other in our quest for peace. During a meeting of the Interaction Council in Cape Town on 22 January 1993, Mr. Lopo do Nascimento, Deputy Speaker of the Angolan Parliament, made allegations of continued South African military support for UNITA. Later the same day President F. W. de Klerk met with members of the Interaction Council led by the former British Prime Minister, Lord Callaghan. President de Klerk pointed out that it was South Africa's declared policy on Angola that the conflict in that country should be ended, and that the efforts by the United Nations to achieve peace should be supported. He added that the democratic process which had begun in Angola should be continued and completed as soon as possible. South Africa would continue to encourage both parties to resume dialogue and enter into negotiations to achieve this objective.

President de Klerk said that he wished to give the categoric assurance that the South African Government was not supporting UNITA militarily or in any other way. As regards Mr. do Nascimento's allegations that South Africa was supplying ammunition to UNITA for G-5 artillery pieces, President de Klerk stated that he had again asked for a report from the Chief of the South African Defence Force (SADF) who reported as follows:

"UNITA does not have any artillery pieces of South African origin and definitely does not have any G-5 guns or ammunition. It is known that UNITA has M-46 (130 mm) and D-30 (122 mm) guns which the movement captured from the Angolan defence force in previous years, while it also has 107 mm multiple rocket launchers. None of the above equipment is utilized in the SADF. Both the M-46 and D-30 guns are large and could have been confused with South African guns. The SADF is not providing support to UNITA and military aircraft are not used to supply UNITA."

As regards allegations of unauthorized flights over neighbouring States, President de Klerk said that these allegations had been thoroughly investigated by the SADF as well as the South African civil aviation authorities. The South African Government was satisfied that no unauthorized flights by military aircraft had taken place.

President de Klerk added that aircraft had flown to Mucusso in south-eastern Angola to resupply the local hospital, of which the Angolan Government was aware. However, at the insistence of the Angolan Government, the hospital had been closed and South African doctors and nurses had been withdrawn on 23 December 1992.

President de Klerk furthermore acknowledged that it was possible that private aircraft could operate from small and remote airfields in South Africa. He noted that any deviation in foreign airspace from previously submitted flight plans could not be monitored from South Africa.

In response to a question from Lord Callaghan, President de Klerk indicated that the South African Government would take stern action in respect of any such unauthorized activity. He also noted that while he did not have any indication that UNITA was being supported from South Africa, he would not hesitate to act upon any concrete evidence which was presented to him.

The Angolan Minister of Defence alleged on 22 January 1993 that a South African Hercules C-130 aircraft had been shot down in Angola. Originally it was stated by the Angolan authorities that the plane had been shot down "flying out of Jamba". It was later alleged by the Angolan authorities that the plane came down in the central province of Huambo at a site which is far removed from Jamba. The South African Government publicly denied on 23 January 1993 that any South African Air Force aircraft had been shot down in Angola and urgently requested the Angolan Government to provide evidence to this effect. The Government requested that the registration number of the aircraft and other details be provided.

During a meeting with Mr. do Nascimento in Johannesburg on 24 January 1993, I again insisted that the Angolan Government provide evidence and further information concerning their allegations. Mr. do Nascimento undertook to convey this request to the Angolan Government. I am still awaiting a response.

The South African Government will not support any party which opts for a miltary solution in Angola, nor will it support any party which attempts to obtain advantages which are inconsistent with the democratic process. The South African Government believes that the only way ahead in Angola now is that proposed by the United Nations Security Council. Namely that the two parties should engage in dialogue, under the auspices of the United Nations, without delay and that the Bicesse Accords be urgently reactivated with a view to their full implementation. Decisive and urgent action is now required on the part of the Security Council in order to avert a disaster in Angola. Your efforts as well as the applicable Security Council resolutions should receive tangible support from the international community and in particular from Africa. There is no alternative for the Angolans other than to engage in discussions aimed at national reconciliation and at the participation of all parties in the democratic process within the framework of the Bicesse Accords. It is of the utmost importance that the United Nations presence should be maintained in Angola.

I was encouraged to learn from the Angolan Government as well as from Dr. Jonas Savimbi on 25 January 1993, that they had agreed in principle to hold talks under the auspices of the United Nations.

We must, however, have no illusions about the difficulties that lie ahead, particularly in creating an atmosphere of mutual confidence, tolerance and respect, after many years of bitter civil war.

I wish to assure you, Mr. Secretary-General, of my Government's full support for your endeavours to bring peace to Angola. The South African Government remains willing to play a positive and supportive role in this endeavour.

(Signed) R. F. BOTHA